

S O U T H W O L D.

January 1895.

Copy of Medical Report sent to
The Southwold Urban Sanitary Authority

Gentlemen.,

I have the honour to lay before you my Medical Report for the year ending December 31st. 1894. In many respects I think it contrasts favourably with the reports of recent years though the death-rate is certainly higher - the average mortality being 16.4 per 1000. - that among children under 5 years of age 3.5 per 1000. It must however be remembered that the town is increasing rapidly in size and in population. In the report of 1891 the total number of houses inhabited is put down at 626; after careful calculation the actual number of houses in the whole town in 1894 is 727 and there has been an increase in rateable value during the last four years of over £1500. Sixteen new houses were finished in 1894 and others are still in course of erection. No sooner are they finished than they appear to be occupied. Taking an average of the last four years the Death-rate is about 13.8 per 1000.

BIRTH-RATE.

The number of births registered in 1894 was 61 or 21.7 per 1000. This shows an increase of 16 on that of 1893. Males 32, Females 29.

DEATH-RATE.

The number of deaths which have taken place in the year is 46 or 16.4 per 1000, assuming the population to be about 2800 on a basis of 4 persons to each inhabited house. Of this number 31 were females - more than double the number of males - this is rather remarkable, as a rule the death-rate among males is higher than among females and there is rarely such a difference as in the present instance.

The following table shows that the usual rule for death-rates at different ages holds good here viz: the tendency to death being ~~at~~ very high in infancy, reaching its minimum at the 15 age period and afterwards increasing steadily through life.

Deaths under	1 year	=	8
..	at 1 .. and under 5 years	=	2
..	.. 5 15 .. = 1		
..	.. 15 25 .. = 3		
..	.. 25 65 .. = 13		
..	.. 65 .. and upwards	=	19
	Total	=	46

There were 10 deaths under 5 years and 23 over 50 years.

CAUSES OF DEATH classified as required by the Local Government Board.

Disease.	Under 5.	Over 5.	Disease.	Under 5.	Over 5.
Small Pox	0	0	Measles	0	0
Scarlatina	0	0	Whooping Cough	3	0
Diphtheria	0	0	Dysentery	0	0
Croup	0	0	Rheumatic Fever	0	0
Fevers	0	0	Phtisis	0	4
Cholera	0	0	Bronchitis-Pneumonia	0	4
Erysipelas	0	0	Heart Disease	0	7
All other diseases	7	21			
			Totals	10	36
					=46.

CAUSES OF DEATH (showing SEX DIFFERENCES.)

Whooping Cough	=3. 1 male 2 females.
Phtisis	=4. 2 .. 2 .. (The Females were visitors.)
Bronchitis-Pneumonia	=4. All Females.
Heart Disease	=7. 2 males 5 females.
Mania	=2. 1 .. 1 ..
Cancer	=2. Females.
	Total 6 Males, 16 Females.

NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

This Act has been in force in the Borough since July 1890 but Measles and Whooping Cough are not included in the list of diseases.

Under this Act have been notified during the past year 3 cases of Erysipelas, 2 of Diphtheria and 1 of Scarlet Fever.

Both cases of Diphtheria were clearly due to noxious smells, the inhalation of foul gases. Both cases were mild and terminated favorably.

The only attributable cause of the case of Scarlet Fever was to be found in some suspected clothing.

WATER SUPPLY.

A large proportion of the supply comes from the mains of the Southwold Waterworks Company who have a large Water Tower and Reservoir on the Common. This water is pure and good. Most of the Cottage Property derives its supply from the numerous wells to be found about the town, many of which as stated in the last report are totally unprovided with covering.

SANITARY INSPECTION.

The usual general inspection of the district has been made during the year. Many nuisances have been abated and no great pressure has been required in any case. There is one Common Lodging House (which has recently changed hands) and no complaint has been urged against it.

DRAINAGE.

Hitherto no proper system of drainage has been in use, but important drainage works have been in progress since last September. The system about to be adopted is termed the "International" in which the Sewage is received into large tanks, after mixture with a material composed of Salts of Iron, Alumina and Magnesia. When it has been long enough in the tanks to allow the sludge to settle the liquid portion will be passed through Polarite Filters and allowed to run into the Buss Creek. The sludge may be dug into the ground or used by farmers on the land.

EXCREMENT.

All excrement is carted away out of the town. The scavenging work is efficiently performed by the present staff so far as is practicable under existing circumstances.

MEASURES OF SANITARY IMPROVEMENT NEEDED.

The attention of the Sanitary Authority has already been drawn in former reports to certain measures which, if carried out, would certainly conduce to the well-being of the inhabitants and remove certain defects which now exist. First as regards Dustbins:- No one, who has not personally inspected some of the huge fixed brick bins which are to be found about the town, can have any conception of the accumulation of offensive matter contained in them, many of them, like the wells are unprovided with any sort of covering, and putrid matter, exposed to rain and sun alike,

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pours its effluvium into the surrounding air. The retention of large quantities of organic and other offensive matter near dwellings is most objectionable and I urge strongly the advisability of substituting for these large fixed bins, small covered tubs or metal boxes which shall be emptied at short and regular intervals by the scavengers.

Secondly as regards a Mortuary - The necessity of providing fitting accommodation for the reception of the dead has been exemplified quite recently when three bodies had to be conveyed to the town-workshop and there deposited on rough hurdles for want of anything better, the last necessary offices for the dead having to be performed under trying circumstances. I would also suggest that place be given, with a Mortuary, for the performance of post-mortem examinations, which at the present time have to be carried out at the house where the patient dies.

There is an utter inadequacy of any means of Isolation or of Disinfection in the town in the event of an epidemic of infectious disease.

BYE-LAWS.

There are certain Bye-laws in force in the Borough in respect of Nuisances, Common Lodging Houses, Slaughter Houses, Hackney Carriages, Horses &c for Hire, Public Bathing, Good Rule and Government of the Borough and also the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act and the Order 1885 relating to Dairies &c.

METEOROLOGICAL DATA.

The rainfall has been considerably heavier than in 1893 and the temperature lower. The highest temperature recorded was 73° on the 15th of August and the lowest 9° or 23° of frost on the 8th January.

A record of Maximum and Minimum Temperatures is kept throughout the year and appended is a table of the monthly means of these together with the annual mean.

January	32.	May	46.2	September	51.4
February	33.	June	47.4	October	46.9
March	38.4	July	57.7	November	43.
April	43.8	August	56.2	December	37.2

The Annual Mean is 44.7

I remain, *Yours truly,*
Your obedient servant
A. C. Oberbeck
Med. Off. Health

